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CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN

THE YEAR'S MOST SENSATIONAL STORY:
**"THE CHALLENGERS
MEET THEIR MASTER!"**

HE MADE GOOD
HIS THREATS!
HE DEFEATED EACH
ONE OF US--NOW
HE'S DESTROYING
ACE!



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WHO HAS CONQUERED MENACES THAT
WOULD FILL ALL OTHER MEN WITH DREAD?

CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN

BUT WHAT SINGLE MAN MUST EVEN
THEY LEARN TO FEAR?

I, JACQUARD,
SHALL DEFEAT EACH
OF THE CHALLENGERS
AT THE ONE THING
HE DOES BEST!

THE CHALLENGERS MEET THEIR MASTER

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IN THEIR GREAT JET TRANSPORT, THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN SPEED TOWARD WHAT MAY PROVE TO BE THEIR STRANGEST ADVENTURE...

REMEMBER, MEN, JACQUARD IS ONE OF THE SMARTEST, TOUGHEST CRIMINALS WHO EVER ELUDED THE POLICE! SO DON'T UNDERESTIMATE HIM--OR OVERESTIMATE YOURSELVES!

OH, COME OFF IT, ACE! YOU'VE LECTURED US ON OVERCONFIDENCE FOR WEEKS NOW! RELAX!



ACE, WHY SHOULD JACQUARD HOLE UP IN AN EMPTY AMUSEMENT PARK INSTEAD OF SOME REMOTE PLACE?

BECAUSE THERE'S A GOOD-SIZED GENERATOR HERE THAT HE CAN USE TO RECHARGE HIS UNIQUE ELECTRONIC SUIT! SEE THE LIGHTS BELOW? THAT MEANS HE'S STARTED THE GENERATOR ALREADY!



SO--YOU STILL THINK YOU CAN CONQUER JACQUARD, EH? DON'T YOU REALIZE YOU CAN NEVER PENETRATE THE HIGH VOLTAGE WEB THAT SURROUNDS ME?

OKAY, WE'RE GOING DOWN TO PUT OUR PLAN INTO ACTION-- BUT JUST THE WAY WE PLANNED IT!



MINUTES LATER...

WHEN I HIT JACQUARD WITH THIS CABLE-GUN I DEvised, A WIRE WILL SHOOT OUT OF IT, WRAP ITSELF AROUND HIM WHILE THE OTHER END GROUNDS HIM, CANCELLING THAT HIGH VOLTAGE!

I'VE GOT A BETTER PLAN! I CONCOCTED A FLUID THAT WILL INSULATE JACQUARD'S SUIT THE MOMENT I SPLASH HIM WITH IT!



BUT THAT WASN'T THE ORIGINAL PLAN, PROF!

SO WHAT? THE CABLE-GUN IS TOO EASY! THERE'S ONLY ONE TROUBLE WITH MY IDEA--I'VE GOT TO BE VERY CLOSE TO HIT HIM! BUT WE'LL BE NEAR ENOUGH WHEN WE REACH THE TOP OF THIS RISE!





CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



AS THEIR CAR
ROARS TOWARD
THE PEAK...

DID YOU FORGET THAT
I CAN FOCUS ALL THE
ENERGY OF MY SUIT INTO
A SINGLE "LIGHTNING"
BOLT-- LIKE THIS?

BAROOM

CRACKLE

CHHH--BROTHER!
HE WRECKED THE
TRACKS! ONLY ONE
WAY TO STOP OUR
CAR FROM SHOOTING
OUT INTO THE
AIR!

SEIZING THE ODD GUN FROM RED,
PROF FIRES BEHIND HIM!

THAT'S GOT IT!
NOW TO WRAP
OUR END OF THE
CABLE AROUND
THE CAR'S
SAFETY BAR...
AND CROSS
OUR FINGERS!

WHOOOSH

LIP UP CLAMBERS THE CAR
TOWARD THE RUINED RAILS,
AND THEN...

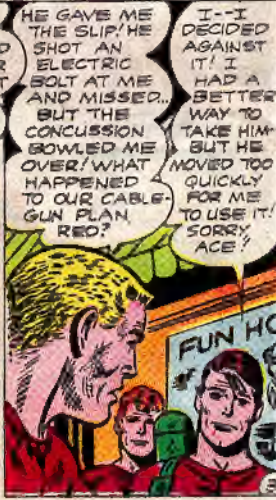
IT WORKED! BUT HE
WON'T GET AWAY!
ACE AND ROCKY
ARE WAITING FOR
HIM DOWN BELOW!

WHERE'S
JACQUARD?

HE SHOT OFF
IN A CAR TO
THE OTHER END
OF THE ROLLER
COASTER--RIGHT
WHERE ACE
WAS EXPECTING
HIM! LET'S
GO--!

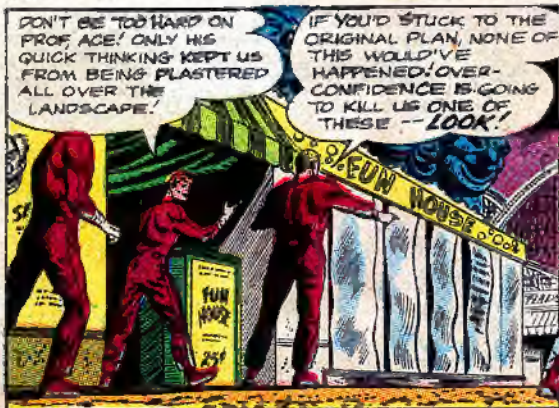
HE GAVE ME
THE SLIP! HE
SHOT AN
ELECTRIC
BOLT AT ME
AND MISSED...
BUT THE
CONCUSSION
BOWLED ME
OVER! WHAT
HAPPENED TO
OUR CABLE-
GUN PLAN,
RED?

I--I
DECIDED
AGAINST
IT! I
HAD A
BETTER
WAY TO
TAKE HIM--
BUT HE
MOVED TOO
QUICKLY
FOR ME
TO USE IT!
SORRY,
ACE!





CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



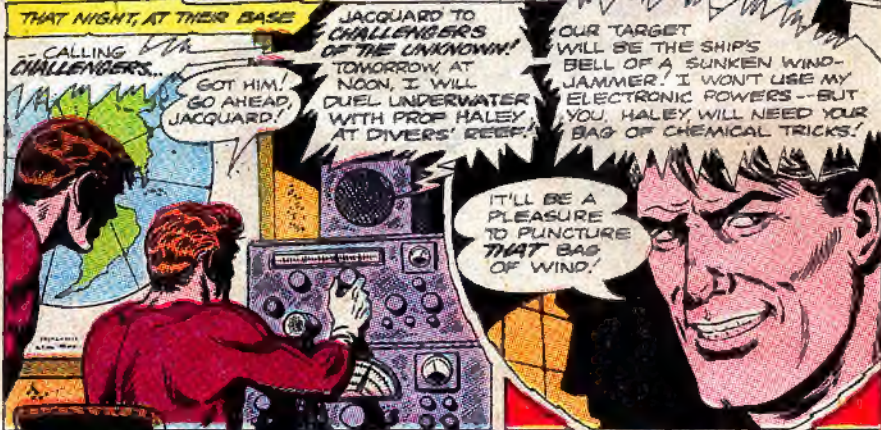
DON'T BE TOO HARD ON PROF ACE! ONLY HIS QUICK THINKING KEPT US FROM BEING PLASTERED ALL OVER THE LANDSCAPE!

IF YOU'D STUCK TO THE ORIGINAL PLAN, NONE OF THIS WOULD'VE HAPPENED! OVER-CONFIDENCE IS GOING TO KILL US ONE OF THESE -- LOOK!

CHALLENGERS:
DO YOU DARE
DUEL ME, ONE BY ONE,
WITH YOUR OWN
SPECIALTIES? TUNE
RADIO, 20 METER-
SIDE BAND AT MIDNIGHT
FOR MY CHALLENGE!

JACQUARD

TALK ABOUT
CONFIDENCE --
THIS GUY'S GOT
IT ALL! WHAT'S
HE GETTING AT?



THAT NIGHT, AT THEIR BASE

-- CALLING
CHALLENGERS...

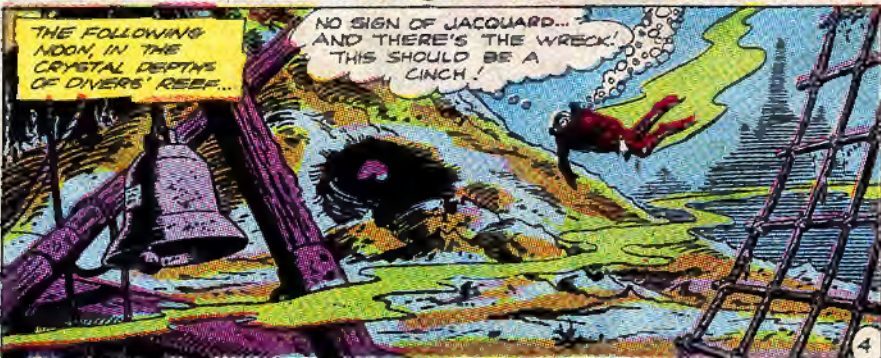
GOT HIM!
GO AHEAD,
JACQUARD!

JACQUARD TO
CHALLENGERS
OF THE UNKNOWN!

TOMORROW, AT
NOON, I WILL
DUEL UNDERWATER
WITH PROF HALEY
AT DIVERS' REEF!

OUR TARGET
WILL BE THE SHIP'S
BELL OF A SUNKEN WIND-
JAMMER! I WON'T USE MY
ELECTRONIC POWERS -- BUT
YOU, HALEY, WILL NEED YOUR
BAG OF CHEMICAL TRICKS!

IT'LL BE A
PLEASURE
TO PUNCTURE
THAT BAG
OF WIND!



THE FOLLOWING
NOON, IN THE
CRYSTAL DEPTHS
OF DIVERS' REEF...

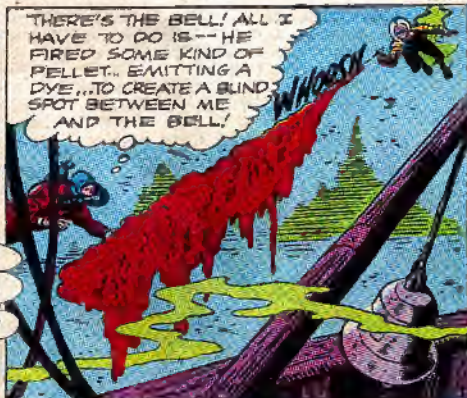
NO SIGN OF JACQUARD...
AND THERE'S THE WRECK!
THIS SHOULD BE A
CINCH!



CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



OH-OH! HERE HE COMES! BUT I'VE GOT A HEADSTART ON HIM! NOT MUCH HE CAN DO!



THERE'S THE BELL! ALL I HAVE TO DO IS-- HE FIRED SOME KIND OF PELLET... EMITTING A DYE... TO CREATE A BLIND SPOT BETWEEN ME AND THE BELL!

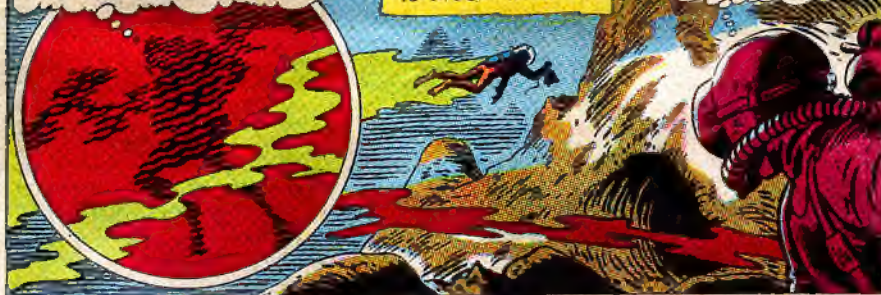
WHOOOY!



CAN'T SEE A THING, BUT I RECOGNIZE THAT DYE! LUCKILY, I HAVE SOMETHING TO COUNTER IT IN THE HOLLOWED-OUT WEIGHT ON MY BELT!

PROF RELEASES A CHEMICAL, WHICH INSTANTLY CAUSES THE STAIN TO DISSIPATE...

HE'S GETTING AWAY-- BUT IF I TAKE A SHORT-CUT THROUGH THAT MOUNTAIN...



AS PROF SWIMS THROUGH THE NARROW OPENING AT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN...



OWWW! CUT MY LEG! TERRIFIC PAIN! FEEL AS IF I--I'M GONNA BLACK OUT!

LATER, ON THE BEACH...

PROF! -WHEW! IT TOOK ME 20 MINUTES TO BRING YOU AROUND! GOOD THING I TRAILED YOU HERE WITHOUT YOUR KNOWING IT! DIDN'T WANT YOU TO THINK I DIDN'T BELIEVE IN YOU!

GLAD YOU DID, ACE! YOU WERE RIGHT! I ALMOST HAD HIM, AND THEN-- I GOT OVERCONFIDENT! SORRY!





CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



THAT NIGHT...

I DEFEATED THE FIRST CHALLENGER! NOW RED RYAN, EXPERT CLIMBER--I DEFY YOU TO BEAT ME TO THE TOP OF MT. BOKAR STARTING AT DAWN, ONE DAY FROM NOW, AND SEIZE A PENNANT PLACED ATOP IT!

CAREFUL, RED! HE BEAT ME-- AND LEFT ME WITH A GAME LEG, TOO!

SHORTLY, IN THE FOOTHILLS OF THE HIMALAYAS...

IT IS WELL I TOLD YOU NOT TO DRESS HEAVILY! WE CAN CLIMB THE MOUNTAIN AND RETURN BEFORE NIGHTFALL! SO THERE IS NO NEED FOR HEAVY CLOTHING!

THE LESS GEAR WE CARRY IN THIS RACE, THE BETTER! LUCKY I FOUND A GUIDE LIKE YOU!



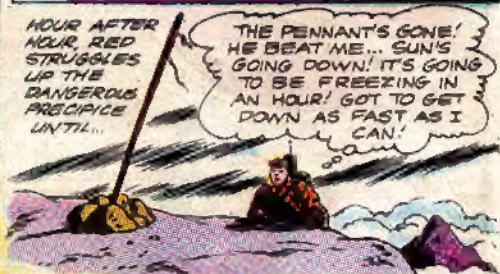
IT'S JACQUARD-- GOING UP ANOTHER APPROACH! I THINK WE'RE BEATING THEM, THOUGH! DON'T YOU?

HE RAN OUT ON ME! WHAT A CHUMP I WAS! JACQUARD PLANNED IT THIS WAY! BUT I'M NOT GOING TO QUIT!



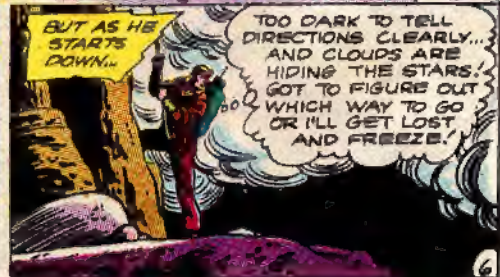
AN HOUR AFTER HOUR, RED STRUGGLES UP THE DANGEROUS PRECIPICE UNTIL...

THE PENNANT'S GONE! HE BEAT ME... SUN'S GOING DOWN! IT'S GOING TO BE FREEZING IN AN HOUR! GOT TO GET DOWN AS FAST AS I CAN!



BUT AS HE STARTS DOWN...

TOO DARK TO TELL DIRECTIONS CLEARLY... AND CLOUDS ARE HIDING THE STARS! GOT TO FIGURE OUT WHICH WAY TO GO OR I'LL GET LOST AND FREEZE!





CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



STRUCK BY A SUDDEN IDEA, RED WHIPS OUT HIS PORTABLE RADIO...

HOURS LATER, HE COMPLETES THE TORTUOUS DESCENT...

I EXTEND THE ANTENNA, TUNE TO RADIO BOMBAY AND THEN ROTATE THE ANTENNA SLOWLY UNTIL -- **ANNH!** THERE'S THE STRONGEST SIGNAL! SINCE BOMBAY IS SOUTHWEST OF HERE, I'VE DETERMINED MY DIRECTIONS!

RADIO BOMBAY CALLING!
RADIO BOMBAY!

YOU ARE SAFE, EFFEND! THE OTHER CLIMBER, JACQUARD, SENT US TO RESCUE YOU!

NICE OF HIM -- AFTER LEAVING ME STRANDED UP THERE! THINK I SPRAINED MY SHOULDER! THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR UNDERESTIMATING MY ENEMY!

TWO DAYS LATER, ROCKY GETS HIS TURN...

I'VE WRESTLED HERE PLENTY OF TIMES -- BUT NEVER BEFORE AN EMPTY HOUSE! WHERE'S JACQUARD?

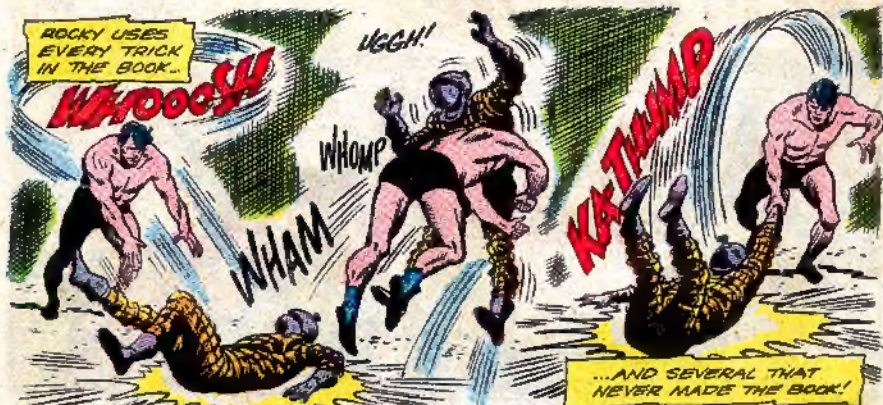
OOOF!

WHEW! GOT AWAY JUST IN TIME! THIS GUY'S AS TRICKY AS THEY COME!

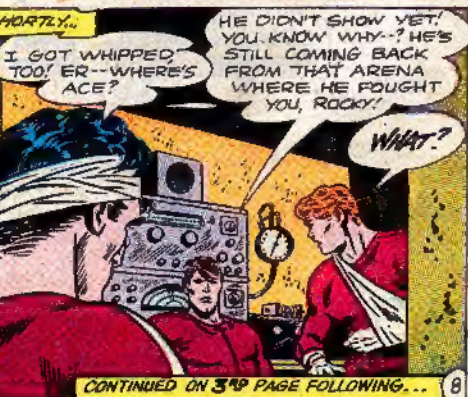
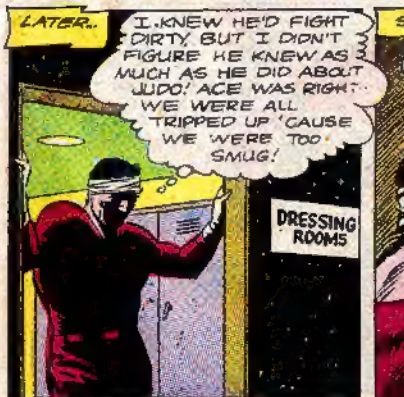
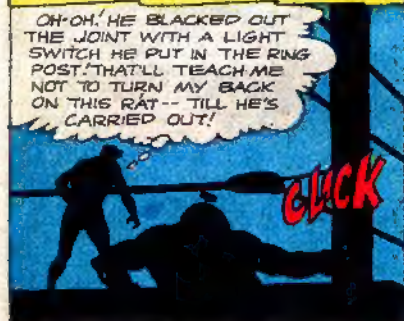
OOOF! A JUDO CHOP! LEAVE US FACE IT -- I'M FIGHTIN' FOR MY LIFE... AND I DON'T MEAN TO LOSE!



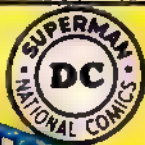
CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



WITH JACQUARD SEEMINGLY UNCONSCIOUS, ROCKY TURNS TO CALL THE POLICE-- WHEN SUDDENLY...



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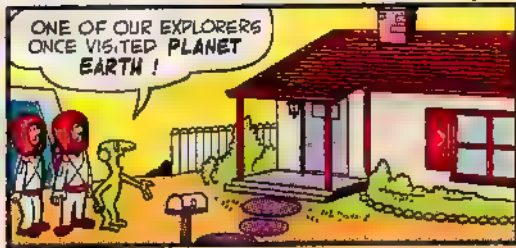
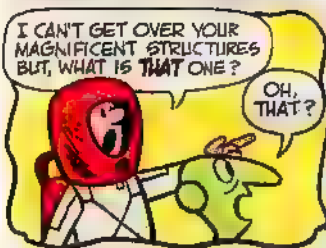
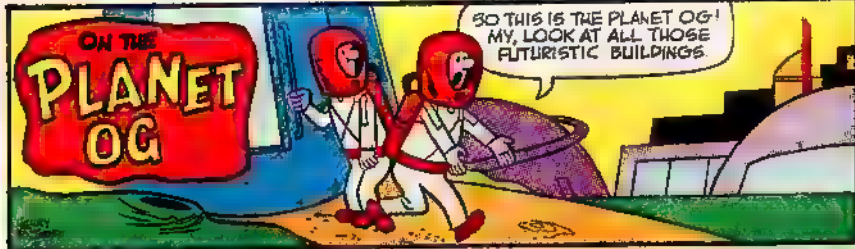
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CAN YOU REPEAT THE PHRASE
BELOW FIVE TIMES IN EIGHT
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A MISTAKE?

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SEVEN
SHY
SOLDIERS**

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Tongue Pleaser!*

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AMERICA'S FAVORITE CANDY

**Tootsie
Roll**



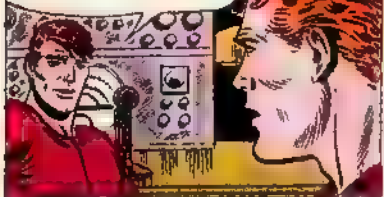


CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



IT'S BEEN BUGGING ME FOR DAYS WHO KNOWS ENOUGH ABOUT EACH OF US TO TRAP US AT OUR OWN GAME? ACE! HE'S USING THIS HOAX TO MAKE HIS POINT ABOUT OUR OVERCONFIDENCE!

BUT IF ACE IS PRETENDING TO BE JACQUARD HOW CAN HE COMPETE AGAINST HIMSELF?



THE PUZZLE GROVE, AS LATER...

I CHALLENGE ACE TO AN AERIAL DOG-FIGHT-- WITHOUT WEAPONS-- AT 'LUCAS AIRFIELD'!

THIS DESERVES AN AUDIENCE! SO WE'LL ALL BE THERE WHEN YOU PIN HIS EARS BACK AND DELIVER HIM TO THE COPS!



EARLY NEXT DAY...

JACQUARD'S LATE! I'VE GOT A HUNCH HE'S NEVER GONNA SHOW

WHY NOT? IF HE BEATS ME, HE'LL PROVE HE'S BETTER THAN ALL OF US!



LOOK OVER THERE-- IT'S JACQUARD! PROOF YOU WERE WRONG! IT WASN'T ACE!

I-AM SORRY, PAL! I FIGURED YOU WERE PULLING OUR LEG! BUT WERE WITH YOU NOW, ACE! GO MAN-- GO!



SECONDS LATER...



BUT BEFORE ACE CAN LIFT INTO THE AIR...

OWW! MURDER! JACQUARD TOOK OFF BEHIND HIM, AND SWUNG RIGHT OVER ACE, FORCING HIM BACK DOWN! THAT GUY'S PLAYING FOR KEEPS!

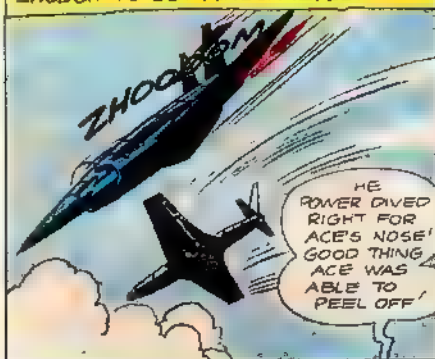




CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



ACE MANAGES TO ELUDE HIS FOE LONG ENOUGH TO GET AIRBORNE, BUT THEN...

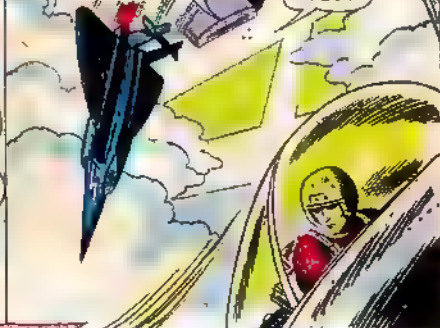


HE POWER DIVED RIGHT FOR ACE'S NOSE! GOOD THING ACE WAS ABLE TO PEEL OFF!

ROARING OUT OF THE DIVE, JACQUARD LOOPS OVER TO COME UP BEHIND ACE TO RAM HIS SHIP...

WOW! ACE SPOTTED HIM AND PULLED UP JUST IN TIME!

GO ON THE OFFENSIVE, ACE-- OR THAT GUY WILL KILL YOU!



AS IF IN ANSWER TO PROF'S PLEA, ACE SKILLFULLY CLIMBS OVER JACQUARD'S SHIP

AND BEGINS FORCING HIM DOWN... LOWER LOWER...

...UNTIL FINALLY...

HE BROUGHT HIM DOWN! LET'S GRAB JACQUARD!

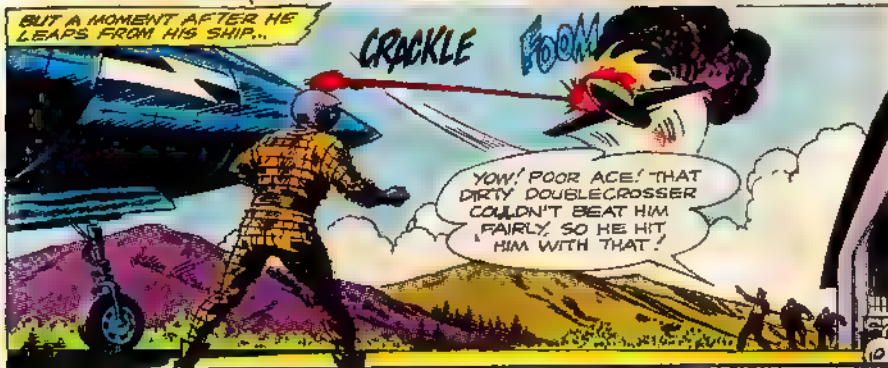
WE'VE WON!



BUT A MOMENT AFTER HE LEAPS FROM HIS SHIP...

CRACKLE BOOM

YOW! POOR ACE! THAT DIRTY DOUBLECROSSER COULDN'T BEAT HIM FAIRLY, SO HE HIT HIM WITH THAT!



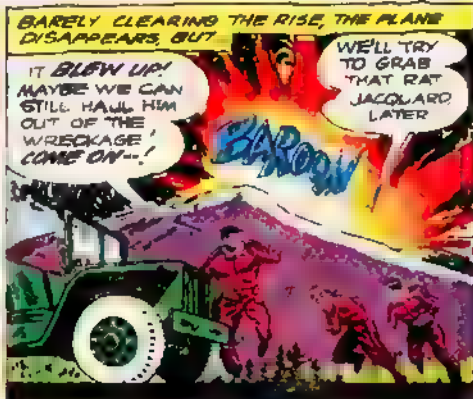


CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



HE'S ON FIRE!
DON'T KNOW IF
HE CAN MAKE
IT OVER
THE HILL

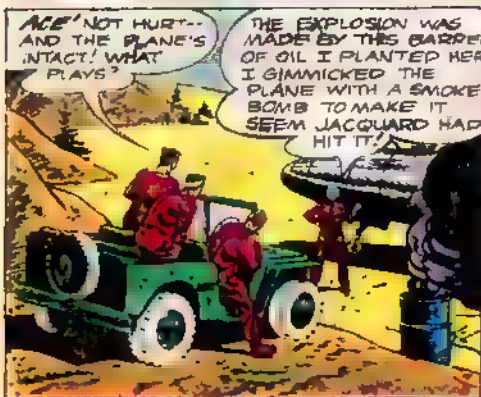
HE
HAS
TO!



BARELY CLEARING THE RISE, THE PLANE
DISAPPEARS, BUT

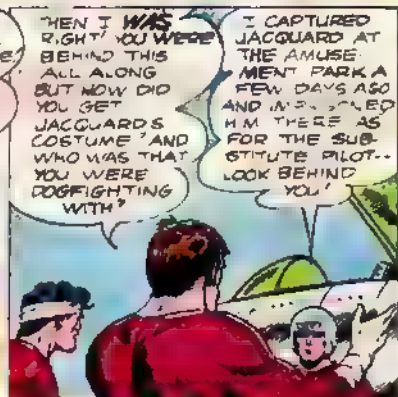
IT BLEW UP!
MAYBE WE CAN
STILL HAUL HIM
OUT OF THE
WRECKAGE!
COME ON--!

WE'LL TRY
TO GRAB
THAT RAT
JACQUARD
LATER



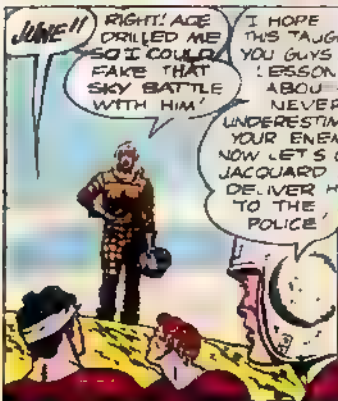
ACE NOT HURT--
AND THE PLANE'S
INTACT! WHAT
PLAYS?

THE EXPLOSION WAS
MADE BY THIS BARREL
OF OIL I PLANTED HERE!
I GIMMICKED THE
PLANE WITH A SMOKE
BOMB TO MAKE IT
SEEM JACQUARD HAD
HIT IT!



THEN I WAS
RIGHT! YOU WERE
BEHIND THIS
ALL ALONG
BUT NOW DID
YOU GET
JACQUARD'S
COSTUME? AND
WHO WAS THAT
YOU WERE
DOGFIGHTING
WITH?

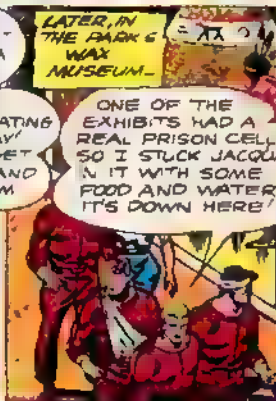
I CAPTURED
JACQUARD AT
THE AMUSE-
MENT PARK A
FEW DAYS AGO
AND IMITATED
HIM THERE AS
FOR THE SUB-
STITUTE PILOT--
LOOK BEHIND
YOU!



JUNE!!

RIGHT! ACE
DRILLED ME
SO I COULD
FAKE THAT
SKY BATTLE
WITH HIM!

I HOPE
THIS TAUGHT
YOU GUYS A
LESSON
ABOUT
NEVER
UNDERESTIMATING
YOUR ENEMY!
NOW LET'S GET
JACQUARD AND
DELIVER HIM
TO THE
POLICE!



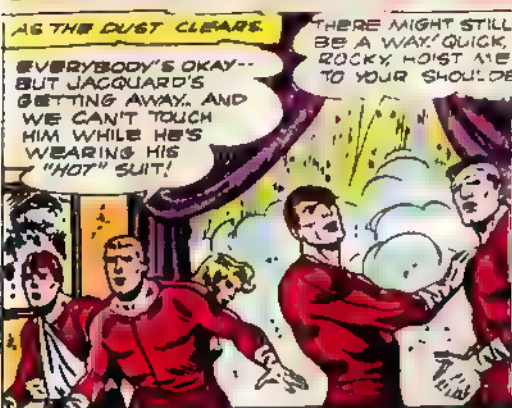
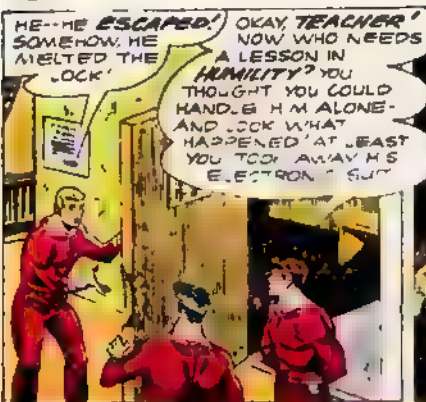
LATER, IN
THE PARK &
WAX
MUSEUM--

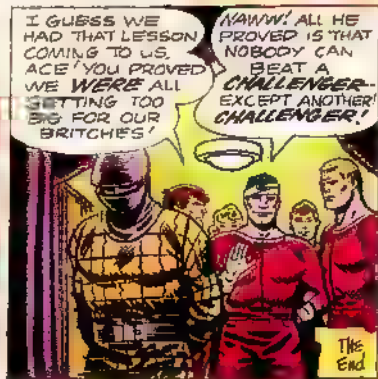
ONE OF THE
EXHIBITS HAD A
REAL PRISON CELL,
SO I STUCK JACQUARD
IN IT WITH SOME
FOOD AND WATER.
IT'S DOWN HERE!





CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN





ADVERTISEMENT

LOOK AT THE TRIANGLE!
Are the sides of the triangle
straight, or are they bent?



ANSWER

THE SIDES ARE PERFECTLY STRAIGHT
THE TRIANGLE YOU WILL FIND THAT
PLACE A RULER ALONG EACH SIDE

YOUR EYES MAY
PLAY TRICKS...
BUT NOT YOUR
TASTE!

buy a

**Tootsie
Roll
POP**

**6 DELICIOUS
FLAVORS**



CHALLENGERS' MAIL CHUTE



Dear Challengers: "War Between the Challengers" was the best story so far, including even the excellent yarns by Jack Kirby when the feature was proved in **SHOWCASE**. I can't understand why you didn't develop it into a complete issue. . . . The most important change that I've detected is the emphasis on characterization for each member of the team. Now, each reacts differently to a situation. They're not distinguished by mere facial appearance and color of hair. There are enough fighting groups to the comic: the gimmick that sets off the *Challengers* is that they are living on borrowed time, so in one story why not give each a different extra-sensory power—clairvoyance, teleportation, telekinesis, etc.—and see if the readers like it.

Rick Wood, Memphis, Tenn.

• • •

Dear Challengers: I like that villainous Multi-Man, but let's see him get our boys into worse trouble with his unique ability to change himself into things more terrifying. . . . And how about involving the team in a World War II adventure?

Harley Standridge, Temple, Okla.

You're a mind-reader, Harley!

Coming up in the next issue, Oct-Nov., *Multi-Man* creates a menace far beyond his expectations in "Multi-Woman, Queen of Disaster" and the *Challengers* slug it out with some Nazis—completely in an action-packed blockbuster titled "Beachhead, U.S.A.!"

• • •

Dear Challengers: "The Man Who Saved the Challengers' Lives" was rather nicely done. . . . I found the first part most interesting and consequently the best part of this particular issue. I especially liked the way you covered the time before the *Challengers'* existence. Very nicely done, indeed. The last 12 pages contained the actual story for this issue, and though they were fairly interesting, they had too much to contend with in the first part. . . . Artwork, beautiful, and again, especially the first half. This was due to the fact that the latter half contained the many desert scenes which tended to diminish the effective shading that Brown does so well. The Splash page probably exemplifies what Brown does best, shading. . . . The best single panel is definitely the one on Pg. 11 that depicts the rapid descent, via a screaming dive, of the *Challengers*. Their thoughts before the crash also added a lot to the panel. And to sum up the art, Brown continues at his superb best. (I can't wait, if I ever get the chance, to see what his originals look like.) Thanks for your time and a great publication.

Tom Jones, Aberdeen, Md.

In reply to Tom's remarks about omitting some of his comments, which were omitted from his letter, lack of space demands that letters often be condensed.

• • •

CHIT-CHAT FROM THE MAIL CHUTE: Mike Kazz, East Chicago, asks for an autographed picture of the team. (We're working on the idea of having them printed!). . . . Gary Speights, Carlsbad, New Mex., just had to write to tell us how much he enjoyed "Master of the Volcano Men" Neil Alan Bunn, Burton, Ohio, takes issue with a couple of points in "The Man Who Saved the Challengers' Lives" and "Secret Origins". . . . "Man-oh-man, was No. 31 great! Loved those stories!" exclaims Fred Romanek, Encino, Calif. . . . "Brown's work is inferior to Simon and Kirby's, but then all artists' are. . . . Anyway, the 'origin' had no mention of the *Challengers'* first case," says Paul Gambacini, Westport, Conn. . . . "Of all the teams, the *Challengers* are my favorite. I'm always waiting at the newsstand for the next issue to arrive," pens Pauline Manning, Middletown, N.Y.

"What are those bright orange stripes painted around the lengths of the fuselages of Air Force planes?" asks Donna Mason, Blandings, Utah. (The *Air Force* adopted the idea to increase visibility in the air in daytime and to help reduce the hazard of mid-air collisions after running tests on 1,000 aircraft of the Air Training Command. The Civil Aeronautics Administration paints its fleet with a red fluorescent paint, as do many government and private helicopters.)

• • •

ATTENTION, SUBSCRIBERS: If your copy hasn't arrived yet, please be patient. With so many subscriptions flooding the office, it sometimes takes almost two months to process the order!

• • •

BEHIND THE CHALLENGERS' SCENES: Bob Brown enjoying great and deserved success with his musical aggregation playing dance dates Saturday nights at Long Island, N. Y., spots. . . . Scripter Arnold Drake writing a movie, which should go into production the latter part of the summer. . . . "The Blue Book of Social Cata," writer France Herren's hard-cover book chalking up so many sales, it'll soon be released as a paperback at a lower price.

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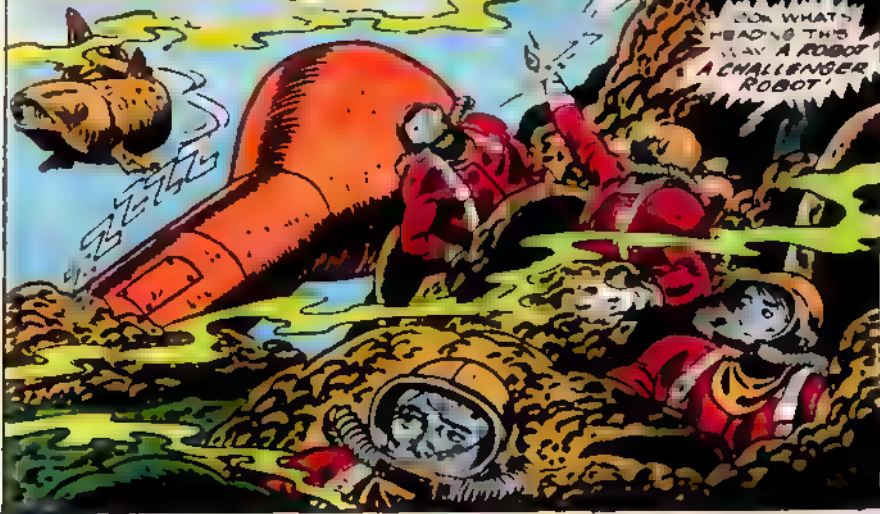
ORRRR

TRAPPED BENEATH THE SEA, THE CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN ARE ABOUT TO BE SAVED FROM A DEATH ONLY TO BE PLUNGED INTO A GRIMMER—MORE STAGGERING—ADVENTURE WHEN THEY ARE MENACED BY

the THREAT of the
TROJAN ROBOT

WHERE WAS THE CAPSULE? THE LAUNCHER HAD ESCAPED AND THE DEADLY RADIATION FROM THE FALLEN CAPSULE MAY START LEAKING OUT

FOR WHAT'S HEADING THIS WAY A ROBOT? A CHALLENGER ROBOT!





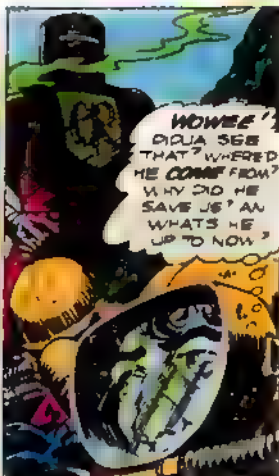
TO THE ADDED ASTONISHMENT OF THE TRAPPED TEAM



BEFORE THE DEADLY RADIATION CAN LEAK OUT, THE COLOSSUS RAMS THE CAPSULE INTO THE OCEAN FLOOR



HOWEE! DIDJA SEE THAT? WHERE'D HE COME FROM? WHY DID HE SAVE US? AN' WHAT'S HE UP TO NOW?



AS THEY GAZE IN WONDERMENT AT THEIR FANTASTIC RESCUER, THE CHALLENGERS RECALL THE LAST, FEW, HECTIC HOURS--BEGINNING WHEN THE MISSILE ROARED SKYWARD.

VEERED OFF ITS CALCULATED ORBIT AS IT DROPPED ITS FINAL STAGE

WHICH FLUNG BACK TO EARTH--INTO THE OCEAN

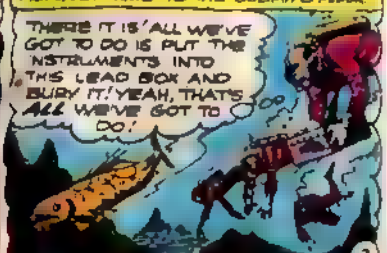


AT THE MISSILE BASE, WHERE THE CHALLENGERS HAD BEEN SLASHED TO SUPERVISE THE SECUR TV GUARDS

WHILE IN SPACE, SOME INSTRUMENTS ASIDE THE CAPSULE ABSORBED DEADLY RADIATION--WHICH WILL SOON BEGIN TO LEAK OUT AND BECOME A MENACE THEY'VE GOT TO BE BURIED--AT ONCE!

SOON AFTER FOUR MEN WEARING SPECIAL SCUBA GEAR RACED AGAINST TIME TO THE OCEAN'S FLOOR

THERE IT IS! ALL WE'VE GOT TO DO IS PUT THE INSTRUMENTS INTO THIS LEAD BOX AND BURY IT! YEAH, THAT'S ALL WE'VE GOT TO DO!





THE CHALLENGERS
NOT ABLE
TO DO ANY
MORE

R.RRUMBLE

AN UNDERWATER
LANDSLIDE--A
DELAYED REACTION
CAUSED BY THE
CAPTAIN'S IMPACT

NO ONE TO
SEE THE
WAY

THEIR MEN ARE GONE
BURNED THE NEW FACES
CERTAIN DEATH INTO A STONY
FELLS MADE TO APPEARANCE



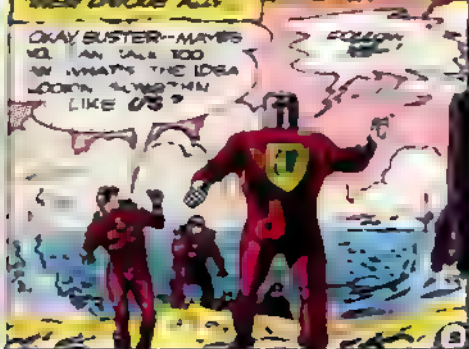
SWIFTLY BRIDGE DOWN--THE NEW
BRIDGE'S OFF TO GREAT ST. VIVE

I DON'T KNOW WHY
HE'S SAYING IS
BUT THERE'S NO
TIME TO ASK
QUESTIONS

FLUTE! NEW THE DEATH TOLD THE
CHALLENGERS' ADULT SURVIVED
THEIR UNIQUE ADULT

OKAY BUSTER--MAYBE
WE CAN TALK TOO
IN WHAT'S THE IDEA
LOOKS SOMETHING
LIKE US?

FOLLOW

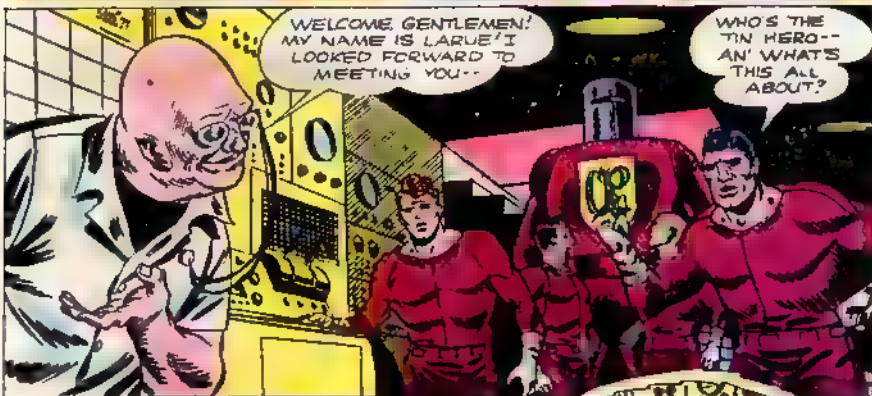
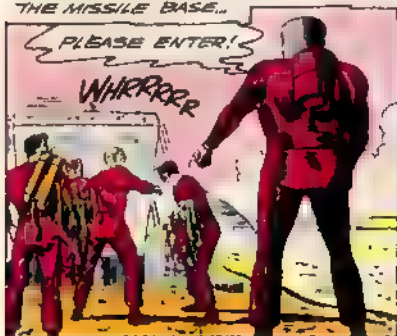




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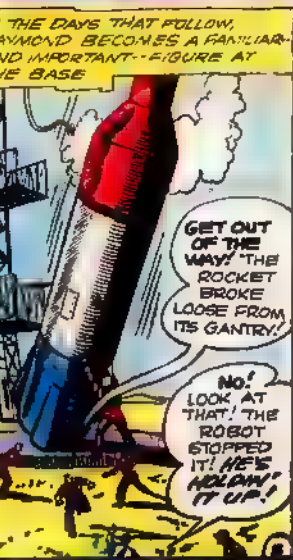
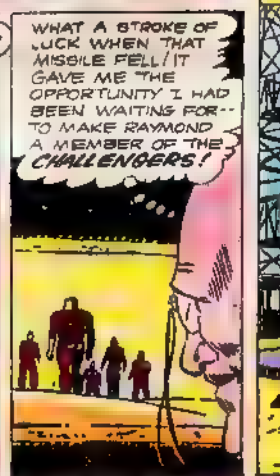
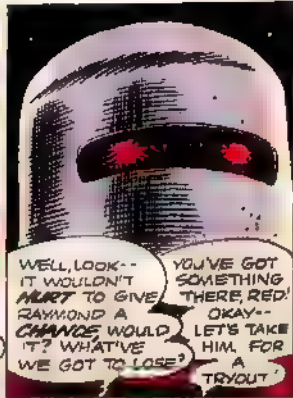


SILENTLY THE FOUR ARE GUIDED TO A CEMENT BUNKER IN A VAST STRETCH OF SANDY WASTELAND, NOT FAR FROM THE MISSILE BASE...



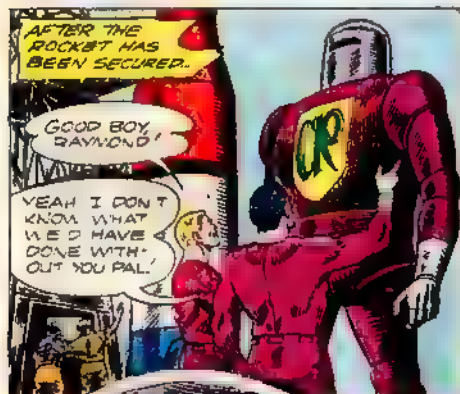


CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN





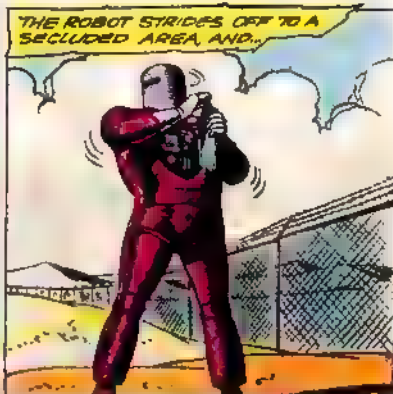
CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



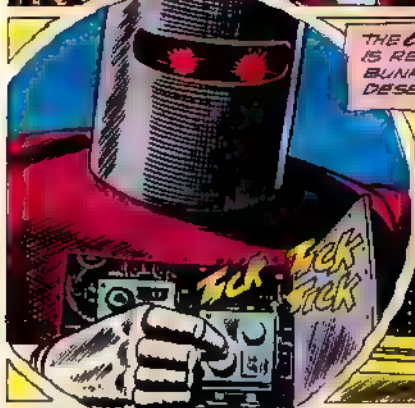
AFTER THE ROCKET HAS BEEN SECURED.

GOOD BOY, RAYMOND!

YEAH I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'D HAVE DONE WITHOUT YOU PAL!



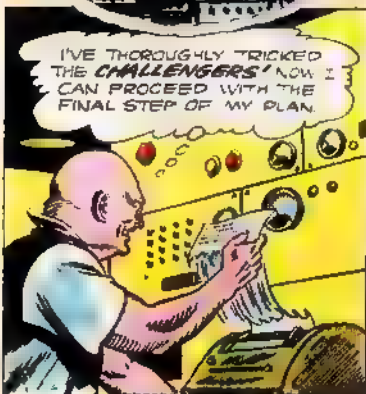
THE ROBOT STRIDES OFF TO A SECLUDED AREA, AND...



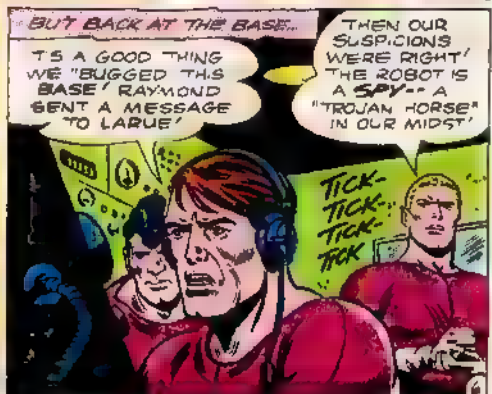
THE CODED MESSAGE IS RECEIVED AT THE BUNKER LAB IN THE DESERT

EXCELLENT, RAYMOND. EXCELLENT! THESE ARE THE VITAL LOCATIONS I NEEDED!

TICK-TICK-TICK



I'VE THOROUGHLY TRICKED THE CHALLENGERS! NOW I CAN PROCEED WITH THE FINAL STEP OF MY PLAN.



BUT BACK AT THE BASE...

IT'S A GOOD THING WE 'BUGGED' THIS BASE! RAYMOND SENT A MESSAGE TO LARUE!

THEN OUR SUSPICIONS WERE RIGHT! THE ROBOT IS A SPY-- A "TROJAN HORSE" IN OUR MIDST!

TICK-TICK-TICK



CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



I'LL TAKE THAT DOUBLE-CROSSIN' JUNK HEAP APART! I **TOLD** YOU GUYS WE SHOULDN'T-A LATCHED ON TO THAT TIN PHONEY-- BUT YOU **INSISTED**!

CALM DOWN, ROCKY! WE HAD TO! WE **SUSPECTED** TRICKERY BUT KNEW THE ONLY WAY TO FIND OUT WHAT LARUE WAS UP TO WAS TO PLAY HIS GAME-- AND ACCEPT **RAYMOND**

I CAN MAKE THAT GUY LARUE TALK!

NO! HE'D CLAM UP! WE'VE GOT TO THINK OF A WAY WITHOUT HIM KNOWING! BUT **NOW?**



THAT **ROBOT** MUST BE WISE TO LARUE'S GAME! IF WE COULD ONLY GET HIM TO SING...

ROCKY! YOU HIT THE NAIL ON THE HEAD. LISTEN--I GOT A REAL W.D. IDEA HOW TO HANDLE THIS "ROUAN ROBOT."

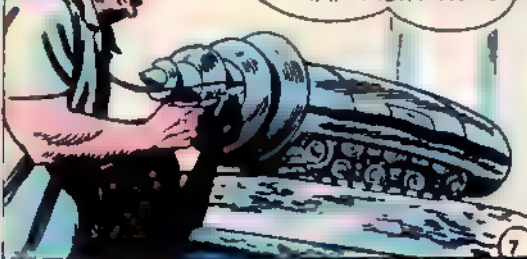
NEXT DAY, IN THE BUNKER...

RAYMOND! I BROUGHT YOU HERE TO BRIEF YOU ON YOUR FINAL TASK!



THREE YEARS AGO, I WAS GANNED FROM THE BASE BEING BUILT FOR "JAMPERING" WITH "DANGEROUS" INVENTIONS! MY CAREER WAS RUINED! THE TIME'S COME FOR ME TO SETTLE THE SCORE **RAYMOND!**

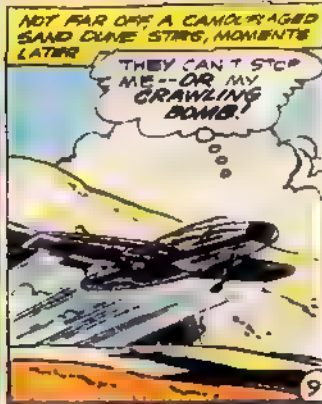
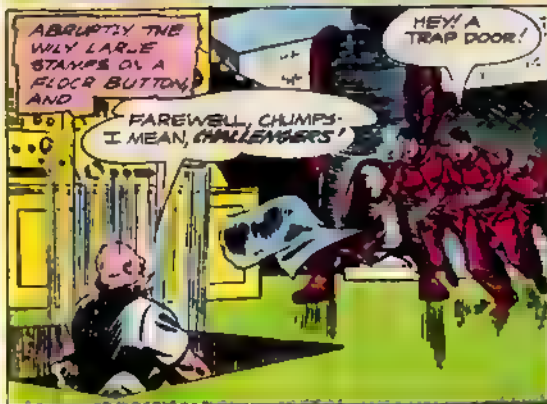
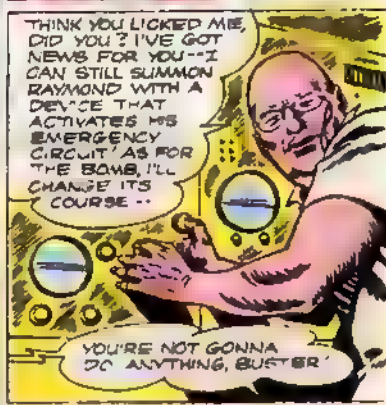
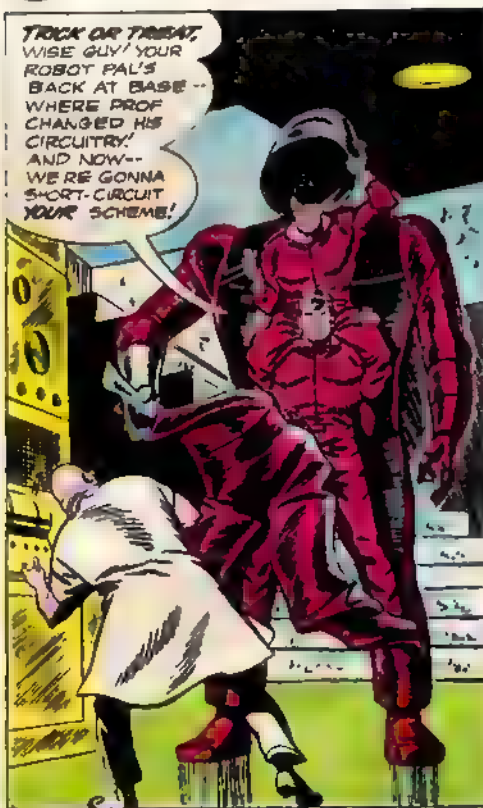
THIS IS A DRAWING OF MY MOST DEVASTATING CREATION--A **CRANKING BOMB**. IT HAS A WAR-HEAD THAT WILL DESTROY THE MISSILE BASE! IT'S ON ITS WAY RIGHT NOW!





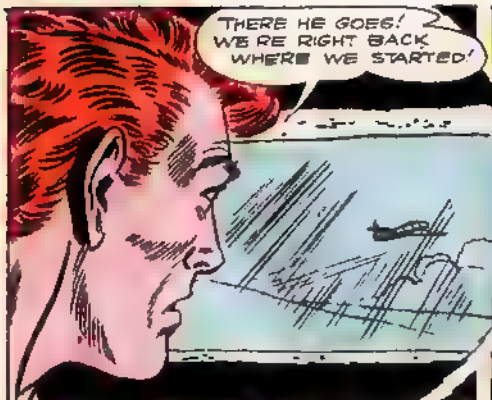


CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN

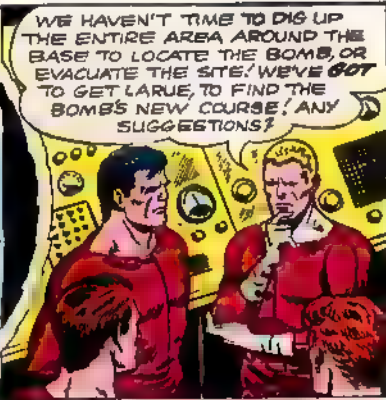




CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN



THERE HE GOES!
WE'RE RIGHT BACK
WHERE WE STARTED!



WE HAVEN'T TIME TO DIG UP
THE ENTIRE AREA AROUND THE
BASE TO LOCATE THE BOMB, OR
EVACUATE THE SITE. WE'VE GOT
TO GET LARUE, TO FIND THE
BOMB'S NEW COURSE! ANY
SUGGESTIONS?



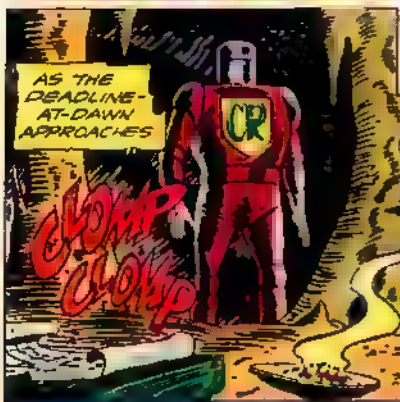
HOW ABOUT PULLING
THE SAME TRICK
AGAIN? LARUE
WOULD NEVER
EXPECT US TO
POSE AS RAYMOND
A SECOND TIME!

PROF--YOU'VE
GOT SOMETHING
THERE!

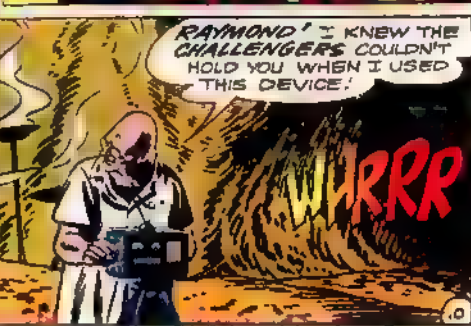
LARUE IS SURE
TO SUMMON THE
ROBOT TO THE
CAVERNS! BUT
RED AND I WILL
STICK WITH
RAYMOND AT
THE BASE--
WHILE YOU TWO
JOIN LARUE!
IT JUST
MIGHT WORK!



HERE WE
GO AGAIN!



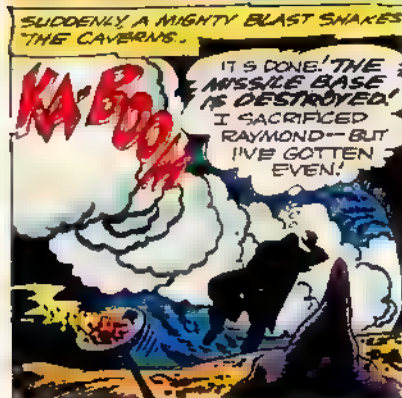
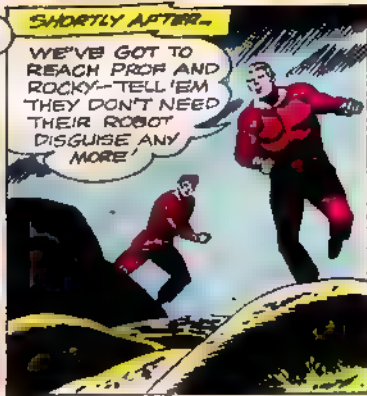
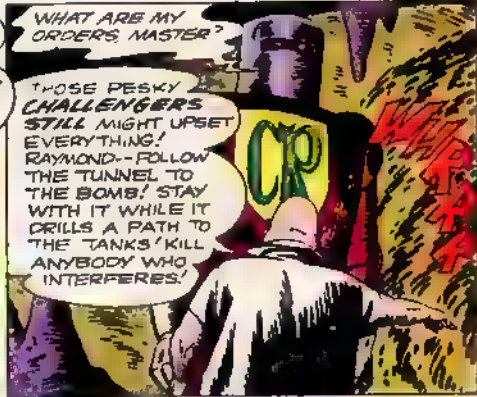
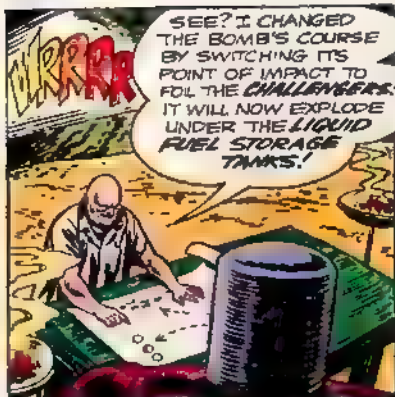
AS THE
DEADLINE-
AT-DAWN
APPROACHES



RAYMOND! I KNEW THE
CHALLENGERS COULDN'T
HOLD YOU WHEN I USED
THIS DEVICE!



CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN





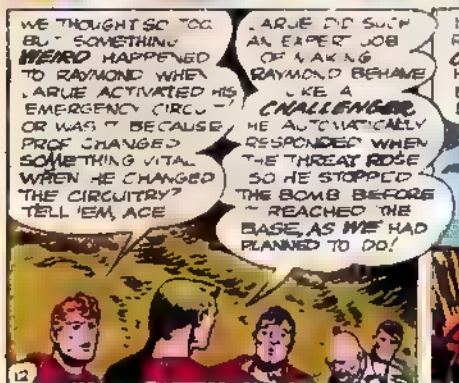
HOLD EVERYTHING--!

HAVE NAILING THE RAT, PROF? HE'LL ANSWER FOR BLOWING UP THE BASE! TOO BAD WE GOT HERE A WHILE TOO LATE!



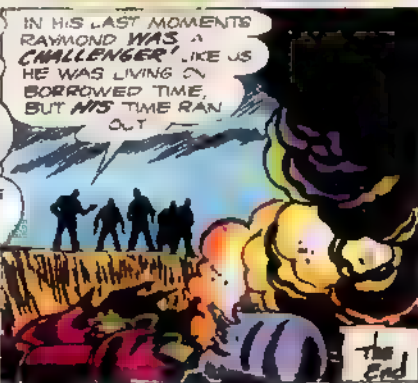
WRONG ROCKY--THE BASE WASN'T DESTROYED! RAYMOND STOPPED THE BOMB IN THE TUNNEL!

BUT WE THOUGHT YOU GUYS HAD RAYMOND UNDER CONTROL!



WE THOUGHT SO TOO, BUT SOMETHING **WEIRD** HAPPENED TO RAYMOND WHEN LARUE ACTIVATED HIS EMERGENCY CIRCUIT--OR WAS IT BECAUSE PROF CHANGED SOMETHING VITAL WHEN HE CHANGED THE CIRCUITRY? TELL 'EM, ACE!

LARUE DID SUCH AN EAGER JOB OF MAKING RAYMOND BEHAVE LIKE A **CHALLENGER**, HE AUTOMATICALLY RESPONDED WHEN THE THREAT ROSE SO HE STOPPED THE BOMB BEFORE ~ REACHED THE BASE, AS **WE** HAD PLANNED TO DO!



IN HIS LAST MOMENTS RAYMOND WAS A **CHALLENGER**, LIKE US HE WAS LIVING ON BORROWED TIME, BUT **HIS** TIME RAN OUT.

The End

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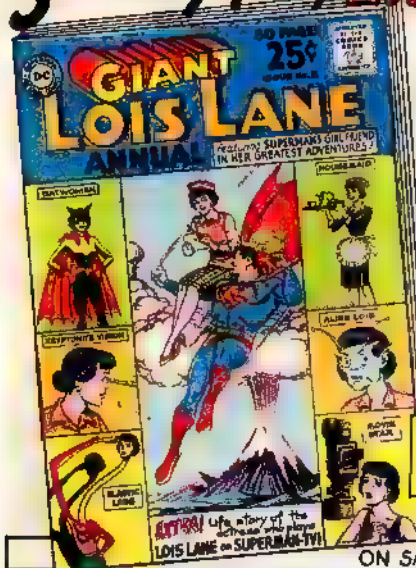


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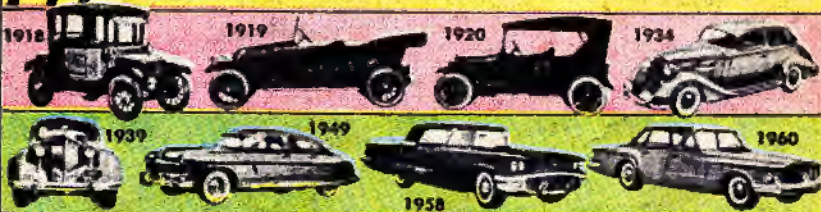
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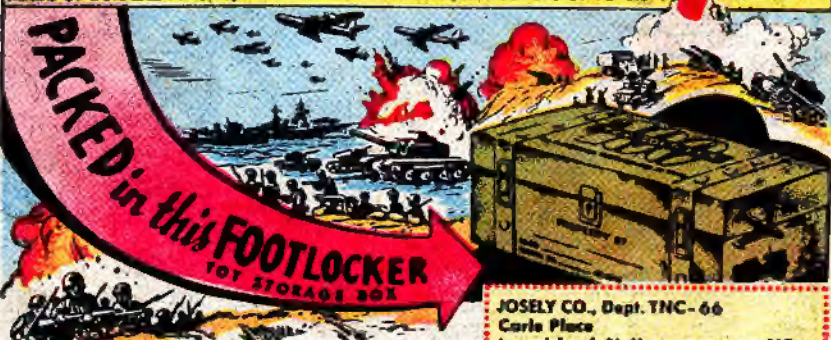
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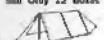


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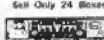
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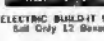
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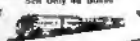
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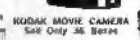
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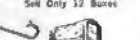
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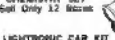
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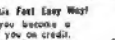
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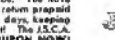
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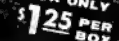
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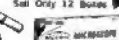
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